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# IMENEO

George F Handel

20, 22, 24 & 26 November 2005 at The Gaiety Theatre

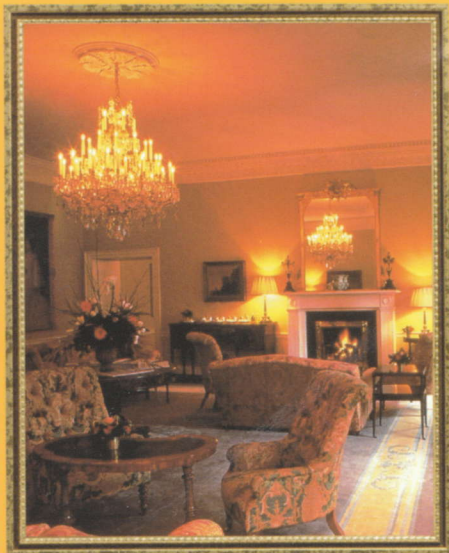


  
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Opera Ireland

presents

# IMENEO

*George F Handel*

Sung in Italian with English Surtitles

CONDUCTOR

Laurent Wagner

DIRECTOR & CHOREOGRAPHER

David Bolger

DESIGNER

Monica Frawley

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Lucy Carter

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Muirne Bloomer

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**Gaiety Theatre, Dublin**

20, 22, 24 & 26 November 2005

*There will be a 20 minute interval*

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# IMENEO

*George F Handel*

Sung in Italian with English Surtitles

Tirinto:

Wilke te Brummelstroete

Rosmene:

Netta Or

Clomiri:

Susannah Habermeld

Imeneo:

Daniel Belcher

Argenio:

Wojtek Gierlach

Wardrobe Mistress:

Neil Watkins



*Imeneo was first performed at  
Lincoln's Inn Fields in London on  
22 November 1740.*

*The first Irish performance, heavily  
revised and given as a serenata  
under the title Hymen, was at the  
Fishamble Street Musick Hall in  
Dublin on 24 March 1742.*



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## Imeneo - the plot at a glance

**T**he plot of *Imeneo* is considerably less complicated than those of most of Handel's other Italian operas. As in many a lyrical stage work, before and since, it involves a love triangle. Strictly speaking, there are two triangles; but it is the one concerning the rivalry for the hand of the central heroine that dominates. Two young Greek women, Rosmene (soprano) and her confidante Clomiri (mezzo-soprano), have been rescued from pirates by the dashing hero Imeneo (baritone). When they arrive back in Athens, Imeneo claims Rosmene's hand as a reward. But she is already betrothed to Tirinto (originally an alto castrato but here a mezzo-soprano). Nevertheless, she finds herself falling in love with her rescuer, which leaves her with the dilemma of having to choose between her gratitude to him and her promise to Tirinto.

A further complication is that Clomiri also secretly loves Imeneo, but he fails to respond to the broad hints she drops. While the rejected Clomiri and Tirinto bemoan their respective lost loves, Clomiri's father Argénio (bass) urges Rosmene to show her gratefulness by marrying Imeneo. After much agonising, not to mention going into a trance and feigning madness, Rosmene is advised by the gods that gratitude must prevail over duty.

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*Following his return to London from Dublin in the late summer of 1742, his subsequent theatre career was based on concert presentations of English oratorio-style works.*

## Handel, Dublin and Imeneo

Handel's extended visit to Dublin in 1741-2 was a turning point in his career. About thirty years previously he had come to London as a composer of Italian opera, and he gave his last opera performances there in February 1741. Following his return to London from Dublin in the late summer of 1742, his subsequent theatre career was based on concert presentations of English oratorio-style works. The previous decade had been a turbulent time for the composer because the security of his operatic career was undermined by the formation of a rival opera company, known as the Opera of the Nobility, and by dissensions among London's opera patrons. In 1732 he introduced an English oratorio towards the end of the programme for his opera season, and in subsequent years he presented Italian or English works as he had opportunity, depending on the availability of theatre venues and the cast of solo singers that he could assemble from season to season. While still making the attempt to produce Italian operas, Handel must have sensed that his operatic career was living on borrowed time in London, while on the other hand his English works were an untried medium to form a basis for future theatrical activity.

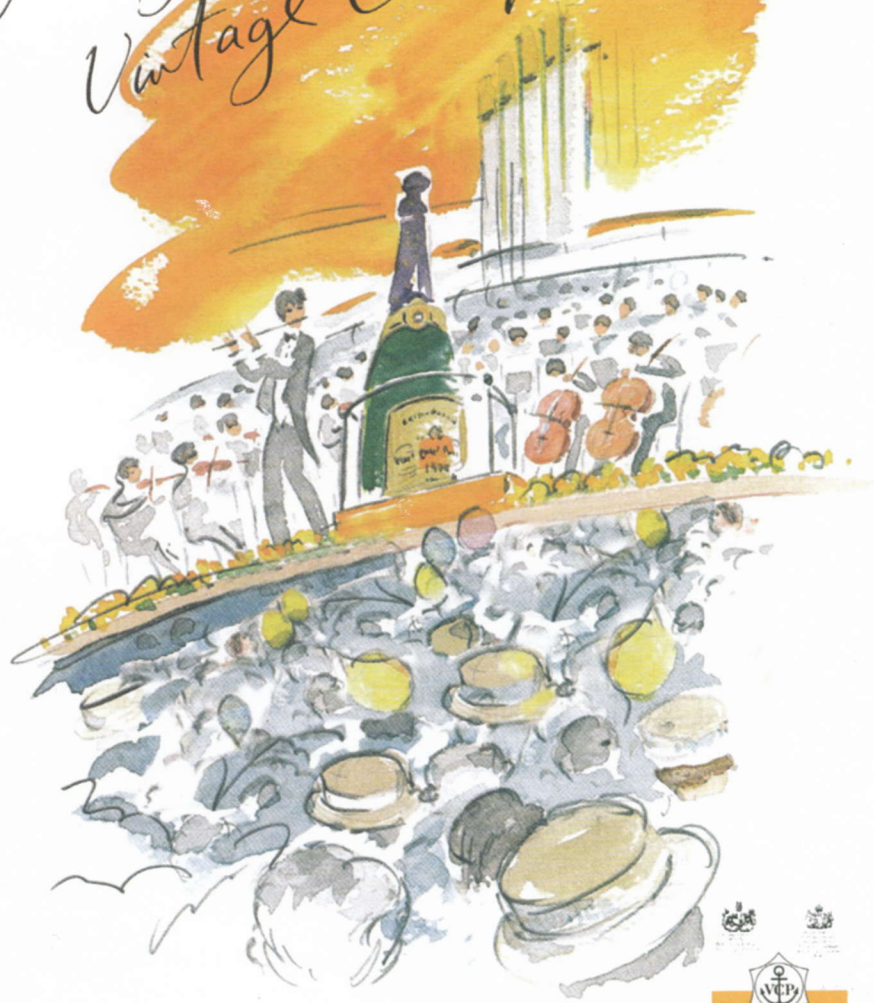
The unusual pattern to the composition history of the opera *Imeneo* reflects the turbulence of Handel's career at the end of the 1730s. By mid-1738 London's operatic management was in total disarray. A few seasons of competition for the London opera audience had left both Handel's Royal Academy of Opera and the rival Opera of the Nobility financially and artistically exhausted. One season of attempted rapprochement during 1737-8, in which Handel had composed two operas for the remains of the rival company but had not given any productions of his own, seems to have debilitated both sides. Calls for a subsequent opera season did not raise enough subscribers, while Handel's experience of the 'combined' season seems to have convinced him that he could not work with the current generation of opera managers, and in future he would have to proceed independently.

During June-July 1738 he drafted the score of a major English oratorio, *Saul*, and in October-November he followed this with another one,



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*In the spring of 1739, however, with the arrival in London of some Italian singers, Handel returned to his manuscript, apparently hoping to manage a production of Imeneo before the end of the season, and he substantially re-composed and completed the music – only to be disappointed yet again.*

*Israel in Egypt*: these would eventually be the new works in a series of performances that he gave at the opera house in the Haymarket during January-May 1739. Between the composition of the two oratorios, however, he also drafted a score of *Imeneo*, dating the commencement on 9 September 1738 and the final page on 20 September 1738, but in the end the circumstances of the 1739 season did not allow him to bring it to performance: indeed, he probably knew from the start that this was going to be difficult, because he left his score in a very unfinished state – with, for example, virtually no music composed for the recitatives. In the spring of 1739, however, with the arrival in London of some Italian singers, Handel returned to his manuscript, apparently hoping to manage a production of *Imeneo* before the end of the season, and he substantially re-composed and completed the music – only to be disappointed yet again.

For the following two seasons he performed in the rather more modest theatre at Lincoln's Inn Fields. In 1739-40 once again Italian opera was out of the question and, rather by default, Handel gave his first-ever season of all-English works. However, in 1740-1, with a more diverse group of soloists including the Italian castrato Giovanni Battista Andreoni for the leading male roles, he gave a mixed programme of Italian and English works. *Imeneo*, heavily re-composed yet again, eventually came to performance at Lincoln's Inn Fields on 22 November 1740. There were just two performances: a third was planned but had to be cancelled owing to the indisposition of the leading lady. Thereafter the English works resumed again, but early in 1741 Handel presented another new opera, *Deidamia*, which received three performances; the one on 10 February 1741 was his last opera performance in London, and he finished off the season with English works.

The events of the summer and autumn of 1741 in Handel's life are on one hand well known, and on the other hand clothed in obscurity. Between 22 August and 14 September he wrote the score of *Messiah*, followed by that of *Samson*, which he finished in draft form on 29 October. Within about a fortnight of the last date he would have been on the road (or the boat) to Dublin, where he arrived on 18 November. The circumstances surrounding the arrangements for his Dublin visit



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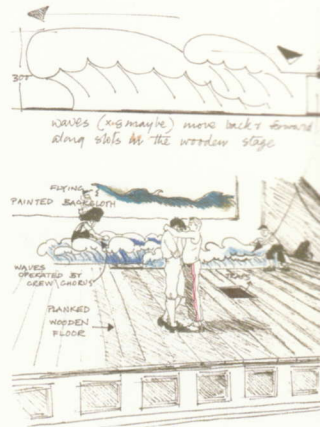
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*In contrast to the rigours of an operatic season in London, for which about 50 performances were expected, Handel advertised in Dublin for a modest subscription series comprising just six concerts of oratorio-style works.*

are unknown, but it looks as if the final stages were resolved very quickly, and perhaps he was not even certain of his forthcoming plans while he was composing *Samson*. Certainly some invitation must have been conveyed from Dublin, probably by the people involved with the newly-built 'Musick Hall' in Fishamble Street. In contrast to the rigours of an operatic season in London, for which about 50 performances were expected, Handel advertised in Dublin for a modest subscription series comprising just six concerts of oratorio-style works. He began on 23 December 1741 with a performance of *L'Allegro, il penseroso ed il moderato*; as he reported in a letter soon afterwards 'the Nobility did me the Honour to make amongst themselves a Subscription for 6 Nights, which did fill a room of 600 persons, so that I needed not sell one Ticket at the Door, and without Vanity the Performance was received with a general Approbation'. He also found the local performers very agreeable: 'I have form'd another Tenor Voice which gives great Satisfaction, the Basses and Counter Tenors are very good, and the rest of the Chorus Singers (by my Direction) do exceeding well, as for the Instruments they are really excellent ... and the Musick sounds delightfully in this charming Room'.

*Esther, Acis and Galatea* and the *Ode on St Cecilia's Day*, together with *L'Allegro*, gave Handel a good programme for his six concerts, and these works (originally composed for London) were adaptable to the local conditions in Dublin: there are, in fact, interesting 'Dublin versions' of the scores that Handel performed here. The venture was well received, so that he was able to advance with a second six-performance series, which began with two performances of *Alexander's Feast* on 17 February and 2 March 1742. However, there were problems over the vocal performers. Handel had probably expected to employ some of the men (and possibly boys) from the choirs of Christ Church and St Patrick's Cathedrals, in the same way that the leading ecclesiastical choirs on London provided some of his chorus voices in London. However, the authorities of both cathedrals prevented this from happening: a ban was apparently in place at Christ Church even before Handel's first performance, while at St Patrick's Dean Swift caught up early in 1742 by issuing an order restraining his vicars from associating with 'a club of fiddlers in Fishamble Street'.



*Act I sketch, Imeneo*

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one of chorists (in furry pants)  
treads on something - Imeneo  
pulls thorn from <sup>his</sup> foot & bandages  
it - we later see him  
put on his lions  
head & go on stage

The number of soloists required was not large, the work was not too long, the arias were attractive, the plot was straightforward and the characters could be conveyed effectively by the singers at Handel's disposal - and the success of the performance did not rely on complex staging, so it could be given at Fishamble Street.

Handel had brought with him from London a soprano soloist, Christina Maria Avolio, who was experienced in Italian opera, and the tenor voice that he 'formed' was probably that of the Dublin theatre and concert singer Calloghan McCarty, but if he was denied access to the professional choirs he would have been short of other voices. It was probably under this pressure, and when preparing for the second subscription, that he sought the services of an English actress who was in Dublin performing at the Aungier Street theatre - Susanna Cibber, the sister of Thomas Augustine Arne. The practical necessity that faced him for the second subscription was to perform a repertory of works that did not require a large cast of soloists, and would make the best use of the voices he had.

In the circumstances, it is perhaps understandable that Handel might have thought to himself: 'I have two opera singers: I wonder if it would be possible to perform anything like an opera here'. *Imeneo*, as it happened, was a perfect repertory piece to meet his needs. The number of soloists required was not large, the work was not too long, the arias were attractive, the plot was straightforward and the characters could be conveyed effectively by the singers at Handel's disposal - and the success of the performance did not rely on complex staging, so it could be given at Fishamble Street. Only one scenic set was specified in the libretto, and that in very general terms: 'Deliziosa', translated as 'A Pleasant Garden'. So Handel did indeed give *Imeneo*, probably marking Mrs Cibber's debut in association with Handel. The first performance was planned for 17 March as the third evening of the second subscription, but Mrs Cibber was indisposed and *L'Allegro* (which could be performed with fewer



Costume sketches

*Imeneo's character, and also its charm, lies in the fact that it is basically a domestic drama, superficially straightforward, but in practice carried forward with great subtlety.*



soloists) was given instead. A week later Mrs Cibber's health problem had been resolved, and *Imeneo* was presented on 24 and 31 March 1742, albeit with the title changed to *Hymen*. Thus it came about that Handel gave his last-ever performances of an Italian opera in Dublin, and not in London. The libretto printed for the occasion described the work not as an opera but as a 'Serenata', and it was probably given in a semi-staged form, but it was a full three-act drama.

Even so, *Imeneo* does not have the elaborate intrigues, sub-plots and power-struggles that are characteristic of most pieces in the genre of Italian opera within which Handel worked. *Imeneo's* character, and also its charm, lies in the fact that it is basically a domestic drama, superficially straightforward, but in practice carried forward with great subtlety. (Miraculously, also, the heavy history of compositional revision did not attenuate the freshness of the music.) Fundamentally the opera is about the choice that Rosmene, the 'noble damsel' of Athens, has to make between two suitors: Tirinto, to whom she is (or is about to be) betrothed, and Imeneo, who makes his case on the strength of his valiant deeds – specifically, rescuing a shipload of Athenian maidens (including Rosmene) from pirates. (Her father Argenio is of course also involved in the negotiations at various stages.) By the beginning of Act Three both of her suitors are exasperated that she has not made her decision, and she adopts a novel way of extricating herself from the embarrassment of having to reject one of them.

The libretto was expanded for Handel from a two-part 'Componimento Dramatico' – a serenata-type entertainment for a wedding in Naples in 1723, originally written by Silvio Stampiglia and composed by Nicola Porpora. Imeneo (Hymen) was the Greek deity who presided over weddings: the point of the story was that, in the end, Rosmene chose her partner for love rather than status. In the original London version of the score Handel treated the musical setting in a rather ironic way. His most elaborate and heroic music went to Tirinto, played by the castrato Andreoni, while the role of Imeneo was played by the young bass-baritone William Savage. Within the *opera seria* convention the principal male characters were represented by the high voices (castrati, or women as substitutes): basses were cast in minor male roles such as priests, old men or subordinate soldiers. The signals in the music that Handel composed

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Though he cut some of the music from the score of the London production, he also introduced other movements, including three arias from *Deidamia* which fitted well into their new contexts in the drama.

for Tirinto left no doubt as to which suitor any girl with ambition should marry; Savage, no doubt, presented a youthful and athletic alternative.

In Dublin the roles were cast rather more evenly: in particular, Calloghan as Imeneo gained one of the major arias that had originally been assigned to Tirinto. Mrs Cibber must have sung the role of Tirinto, and Avolio would have played Rosmene. The other characters, Argenio and Clomiri, were carried over from the London version, but the music for Clomiri, a young lady who complicates the plot through her infatuation with Imeneo, was drastically reduced: it is not certain who the singers were for these roles. What is clear, however, is that Handel revised the score considerably, not only to accommodate his new soloists, but also to suit the circumstances of his Dublin performers and audiences in a more general way. Though he cut some of the music from the score of the London production, he also introduced other movements, including three arias from *Deidamia* which fitted well into their new contexts in the drama. Most striking of all, however, was his introduction of two duets for Rosmene and Tirinto: he obviously liked the musical combination of Cibber and Avolio. One duet, a particularly fine movement originally composed for the opera *Sosarme*, comes in the final scene of Act Three – almost as a musical consolation prize to Tirinto for losing. The other, the closing movement for the end of Act One – ‘Vado e vivo colla speranza’ – must actually have been composed in Dublin, presumably at Handel’s house ‘in Abbey-street, near Lyffey-street’.



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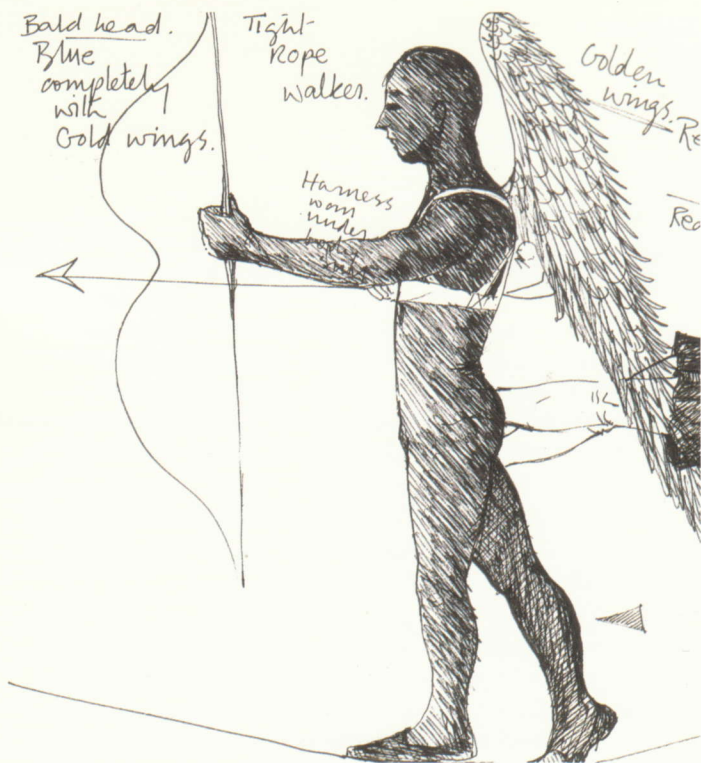
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## A Hymn to Hymen

**W**hen Handel's penultimate opera was performed in Dublin in 1742, its Italian title was changed to *Hymen*. In ancient Greece, the name Hymen (or Hymenaeus) had two meanings. In one sense it referred to the hymns sung by bridesmaids as they accompanied the bride from her father's home to that of her intended husband. But it was also the name given to the deity invoked in those songs, Hymen the god of marriage. Hymen is said to have acquired his godhood as a result of his heroic rescue and successful wooing of the lovely Rosmene as depicted in the plot of Handel's opera.

Some sources say that Hymen was the fruit of a union between Apollo and the Muse Caliope; others have him as the son Dionysus and Aphrodite. In either case he was seen as a god of fruitfulness and was usually depicted as a winged youth whose head was dressed with flowers of the herb maijoram. He wore golden sandals on his feet and in each hand he carried nuptial symbols – a flame-coloured bridal veil in the right one and the nuptial torch in the other. He was always accompanied by an entourage of singers and dancers, and no marriage could take place without him being invoked to sanction it.

*Hymen is said to have acquire his godhood as a result of his heroic rescue and successful wooing of the lovely Rosmene as depicted in the plot of Handel's opera.*

*By the eighteenth century, Fishamble Street had lost its piscine function and had become a leading musical venue. The proximity of two trained choirs in Christ Church Cathedral and St Patrick's Cathedral was a bonus.*



*Then, as now, charitable giving was sweetened by the appearance of notable people at musical performances. Handel was a generous contributor to the various charities associated with his music.*

## "A German and a Genius"

**I**n the music annals of Dublin, Fishamble Street has an historic significance; but it also has the distinction of being one of the oldest inhabited sites in the city. It borders Wood Quay, an early Viking site, on the east and Winetavern Street on the west. Up until medieval times fish was landed on the quays and then gutted and sold in Fishamble Street. Further up the hill on High Street was the Fleshambles, where meat was prepared and sold. So, with Winetavern Street being the venue for wine and other intoxicating liquors, the area must have been noisy and full of pungent smells.

By the eighteenth century, Fishamble Street had lost its piscine function and had become a leading musical venue. The proximity of two trained choirs in Christ Church Cathedral and St Patrick's Cathedral was a bonus. A new Musick Hall had been opened in the street in October 1741 and plans were already afoot to entice the leading composer of the day, George Frideric Handel, to play his music there. Luckily for Dublin, Handel was at a loose end in London, where his career was then in the doldrums. He arrived in Dublin on the 17 November 1741, having been delayed at Chester due to contrary winds, and lodged in Abbey Street, across the river from the Musick Hall.

Dublin at that time had increased its population from around 58,000 at the end of the seventeenth century to an estimated 130,000 by the time of Handel's visit. Although Dublin society was dominated by the Protestant Ascendancy, there was a huge underclass of mostly Catholic incomers from the countryside. But to complicate the picture, not all the poor were Catholic; a good number were unemployed Huguenot weavers from the Coombe and around St Patrick's Cathedral. There were also some Catholic middle-classes, and it was during the eighteenth century that they began their steady climb up the social ladder. But, whatever their respective religions, Dublin was teeming with poor, and by the mid-century charities were set up to deal with some of the chronic problems associated with poverty, overcrowding, unemployment and disease. Then, as now, charitable giving was sweetened by the appearance of notable people at musical performances. Handel was a generous contributor to the various charities associated with his music.





Dublin was the place the Ascendancy flocked to during the “season”. There was a winter season from November to March and a shorter one from April to May. During the summer months, those who could went on holidays, or back to their country estates. In the meantime, a large number of seasonal workers left their homes in the countryside and crowded into Dublin during these “seasons”.

Handel's *Imeneo*, or *Hymen* as it was called in Dublin, is a romantic comedy in a pastoral setting. Such pastoral plays were very popular in the eighteenth century. The triumph of order, reason and love on stage was in stark contrast to life on the streets of any city of that time. One person who understood the difference between reality and fantasy was Dean Johhathan Swift. Swift was not enamoured of his native city. 'I am getting an ill head in this cursed town for want of exercise', he complained. He was often irascible, but he could be very generous as well, and he used his considerable powers as Dean of St Patrick's to dispense charity to the poor of the Coombe and the Liberties.

There were compensations for living in Dublin however, and one of them was that household expenses were so much cheaper than in England. Shops were colourfully named. Swift, if he so desired, could have gone along to the Spread Eagle in the Coombe to purchase corsets; the Half Moon and Seven Stars in Francis Street to obtain poplin; and the Hen and Chickens in Werburgh Street for his linens. Dublin also had a very lively theatre scene, and many famous actors appeared there. While Handel was in residence, David Garrick and Peg Woffington appeared together in various plays, to great acclaim. Woffington, who was born in Dublin in 1714, began her stage career with a children's company called the Lilliputians in *The Beggar's Opera* and went on to become one of the most celebrated actresses in English of the eighteenth century.

*Hymen* played to appreciative audiences on 24 and 31 March 1742, as had *Esther* the previous month. But the culminating triumph of what can only be described as a festival of Handel's music was the sublime *Messiah* on the 13 April 1742 at the Musick Hall in Fishamble Street. Before he left Dublin, Handel paid a courtesy visit to the ageing and ailing Dean of St Patrick's. Swift is reported to have said: 'O! A German and a genius. A prodigy. Admit him.'

Joan Allen

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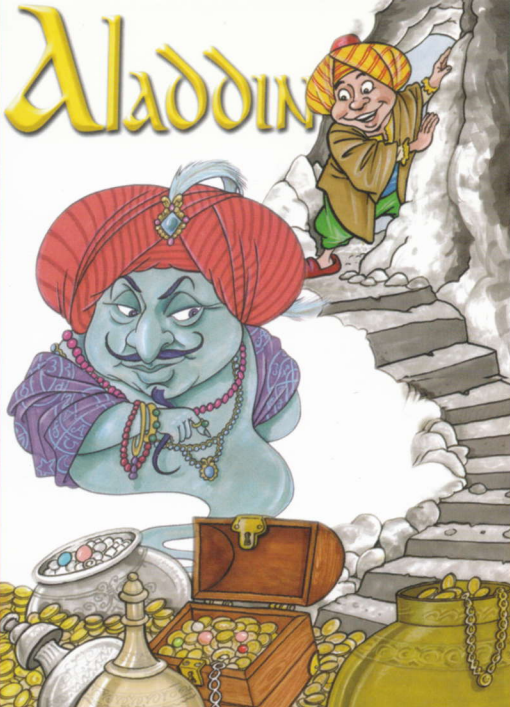
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## Biographies

### **Daniel Belcher – Baritone (USA) *Imeneo***

In the 2005-2006 season, Daniel Belcher sings Figaro in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* both in Tokyo and at Utah Opera, a role he has also sung at Arizona Opera, Lake George Opera, Opera Festival of New Jersey and at the Wolftrap Opera. He will return to Opera Atelier for the title role in Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, and also return to the Théâtre du Chatelet for performances of Maalouf's *L'Amour de loin* in the spring. In the 2004-2005 season, Mr. Belcher enjoyed a tremendous success by creating the leading role of Prior Walter in the Peter Eötvös opera *Angels in America* which premiered at the Châtelet. Mr Belcher regularly performs at several companies in the United States and abroad including San Francisco Opera, New York City Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Eugene Opera, Wolftrap Opera, Central City Opera, Fort Worth Opera, San Francisco, Kentucky Opera, the Garsington Festival, Opera Atelier and Canadian Opera Company, among others.



### **Wilke te Brummelstroete – Mezzo-soprano (Netherlands) *Tirinto***

Wilke te Brummelstroete performs an eclectic repertoire that ranges from Baroque, through the classical and romantic, up to contemporary music. Since her debut as Purcell's Dido in 1991, she has secured a solid reputation working with leading conductors such as Gardiner, McGegan, Marriner, Norrington, Koopman, Harding, Nagano and Thielemann. She has also toured the world with Franz Brüggen. She has sung with the Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields, the Irish Chamber Orchestra, Orchestra della Toscana, Orchestre de Paris, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, the Munich Philharmonic and the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra San Francisco. In opera, her roles include Handel's Teseo, Ruggiero, Storgé, Juno and Ino; Monteverdi's Ottavia, Melanto and Penelope; and Costanza in Haydn's *L'isola disabitata*. She has sung these in Berlin, Brussels, San Francisco, Vienna, Wiesbaden and Zurich as well as at the Händel-Festspiele Göttingen, the Massachusetts International Festival and the Sydney Festival. Wilke te Brummelstroete can be heard on many recordings including Gardiner's disc of Bach Cantatas which won the 2005 Gramophone Record of the Year as well as the 2005 Baroque Vocal award.





### **Wojtek Gierlach – Bass (Poland) *Argénio***

Wojtek Gierlach studied with Kazimierz Pustelak at the Warsaw Chopin Music Academy, from which he graduated with a Masters Degree with distinction. He has won major prizes at international vocal competitions in Ada Sari (1999), Bilbao (2000), Milan (2001) and Barcelona (2004). He performed the title roles in *Imeneo* and *Don Giovanni* at Warsaw Chamber Opera and La Coruna Mozart Festival, Leporello at Warsaw Grand Theatre and Nico Opera Cape Town as well as Figaro at Teatro Piccini di Bari. His Rossini roles are Mustafa, Alidoro, Lord Sidney, Don Profundo, Basilio and Gouverneur (*Le Comte Ory*), sung in Ravenna, Klagenfurt, Warsaw, Wilbald and the festivals of Pasero and Aix-en-Provence. His repertoire also includes Mirteo in Meyerbeer's *Semiramide* and Salieri in Rimsky-Korsakov's *Mozart and Salieri*. Wojtek Gierlach also performs regularly in oratorio. His repertoire includes sacred works by Bach, Salieri, Haydn, Mendelssohn and Verdi, which he has sung in Poland as well as in Italy and at the Prague Spring Festival.



### **Susannah Habermeld – Mezzo-soprano (Switzerland) *Clomiri***

Zurich-born Susannah Habermeld's previous Opera Ireland roles were Mercedes in *Carmen* and Third Lady in *Die Zauberflöte*. Before studying singing, she worked as an assistant director in theatre and film. She also studied contemporary dance and received her B. Mus. (Hons) in 1998 at the Manchester RNCM. Since then she has worked with Académie Européenne du Festival d'Art Lyrique of Aix-en-Provence and has sung in Brooks' production of *Don Giovanni* and Braunschweig's *Die Zauberflöte* at the Opera Studio in Biel. She sang Maddalena in *Rigoletto* and Petra in Sondheim's *A Little Night Music* at Ensemble Theatre Biel/Solothurn, and the title part in Victor Fennigstein's setting of Brecht's *Die heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfe* in Bern and Luxemburg. She sang Gioconda Farfalla in *Black Tell*, a work commissioned for the EXPO 02 in Switzerland, Nancy in *Martha* in Hof, Germany, and Nireno in *Giulio Cesare* in Bern. She recently sang in *The Pirates of Penzance* with Howard Griffiths in Zürich.

### **Netta Or – Soprano (Germany) *Rosmene***

Netta Or studied at the Cologne Musikhochschule and joined the Opera Studio of the Deutsche Oper am Rhein in Düsseldorf in 2001. Two years later she was accepted into the senior company's ensemble. She has also performed with the Bonn Opera and in Hagen, Klagenfurt and Montepulciano (as Despina in *Così fan tutte*). In Düsseldorf she has sung Mozart's Barbarina and Papagena, Bizet's Frasquita, Najade in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and the Italian Singer in *Capriccio*. In concert, Netta Or has performed many early music works and large sacred oratorios, including several Handel oratorios, the Bach *Passions*, and Brahms's *German Requiem* in such venues as the Cologne Philharmonie, the Beethoven Hall in Bonn, the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, and at the Handel festivals of Karlsruhe and Göttingen. Among her musical partners have been Nicholas McGegan, Jun Märkl and Berlin's Akademie für Alte Musik. At the 2005 Schwetzingen Festival she appeared in Alessandro Scarlatti's *Telemaco* under the baton of Thomas Hengelbrock.



### **Laurent Wagner (France) Conductor**

Laurent Wagner, who has previously conducted *Salome*, *Katya Kabanova*, *Fliegende Holländer*, *Norma*, *Jenufa* and *Orfeo ed Euridice* for Opera Ireland, is principal conductor of the RTÉCO. Born in Lyon, he studied piano, bassoon, harmony and chamber music there before joining the Kapellmeister class of Professor Österreicher in Vienna in 1982. He built up a large repertoire as Kapellmeister at various German opera houses, including contemporary works (world premiere of the Hiller/Ende *Pied Piper of Hamelin*, D'Argento's *The Voyage*). As General Music Director of the Saar State Opera in Saarbrücken, he programmed and performed works like Messiaen's *Turangalila* Symphony, Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron* and Berg's *Wozzeck* and *Lulu*. He also conducted Berg's complete orchestral works. His main interests are the German symphonic repertoire and German and Italian opera. Besides his post with the RTÉCO and as Opera Director in St Gallen, he works regularly as guest conductor, mainly in Europe, although he has also conducted in Tokyo, Beijing and Sao Paulo.







### **David Bolger (Ireland) Director/Choreographer**

David Bolger, who directed Opera Ireland's award-winning *Orfeo and Euridice* last year, is the co-founder and Artistic Director of CoisCéim Dance Theatre, with whom he has performed worldwide and whose *Knots* won Best Production at this year's Dublin Fringe Festival. In 2001, he co-wrote and choreographed the film *Hit and Run* which won several major international awards. He was also nominated for the American Choreography Award, L.A. In June 2003 he created *A Dash of Colour*, a four-minute dance sequence involving 75,000 people, for the Opening Ceremony at the Special Olympics held in Dublin. As a freelance choreographer, David Bolger has worked in theatre, opera and film in Ireland and overseas. His most recent credits include *Pirates of Penzance* in Minneapolis and *Playboy of the Western World* for Druid. He choreographed the dances for the 1998 film *Dancing at Lughnasa* as well as for the world premiere of Nicholas Maw's opera *Sophie's Choice* at Covent Garden in December 2002.



### **Monica Frawley (Ireland) Designer**

Monica Frawley, who designed Opera Ireland's award-winning *Orfeo ed Euridice*, is a graduate of the NCAD and Central St Martin's School of Art. During the last 25 years, her designs have also been seen in Ireland, the UK, mainland Europe, the US, Canada and Australia. In 2003 she received The Irish Times/ESB Award for Best Costume Design on b\*spoke's production of *The Drunkard*. Her recent work for the Abbey and Peacock includes *The Gigli Concert*, *The Tempest*, *By the Bog of Cats*, *Juno and the Paycock*, *Translations*, *Heavenly Bodies* and costumes for *The Playboy of the Western World*. She has also worked with Druid and Belfast's Lyric Theatre. In 2001 she designed *Da* for the Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis and in 2003 was Design Consultant for the Special Olympics opening ceremony. Her 2004 designs included *Shimmer* for Traverse Theatre at Edinburgh Festival. Most recently she designed *Out of Harm's Way*, a dance piece for Theater Freiburg in Germany.

### **Lucy Carter (UK) Lighting Designer**

Lucy Carter studied dance and drama, then gained the advance diploma in Lighting Design at Central School of Speech and Drama. Her recent designs for theatre and opera include: *The Tempest* in Ipswich, *Frankenstein* in Derby, *Top Girls* in Manchester, *Larkin with Women* at West Yorkshire Playhouse, *The Rape of Lucretia* for European Opera and *Ciboulette*, University College Opera. Recent dance lighting designs include *Engram*, Royal Ballet Linbury Studio: *Amu* and *AtaXia*, Random Dance; *Dragonfly*, Random Dance and DanceCit; *Lachrymal*, Stuttgart Ballet; *Ballistik*, Les Ballets de Monte Carlo; *La Spectre de la Rose*, Ballet de Lorraine, Nancy; Triple Bill for Shobana Jeyasingh; *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Carmen-Privat*, both for Saarbrücken Ballet; *Reflection*, Rambert Dance; Phoenix Dance Spring Programmes 2004 and 2003; *Hinterland* - reworking of site specific work created for Dance Umbrella and Shobana Jeyasingh; *Alpha* and *Polar Sequences*, Random, *2 Human*, English National Ballet, *Nautilus*, Stuttgart Ballet, *Qualia*, Royal Ballet; *Silence of the Soul* for Choreographer Fin Walker.



### **Cathal Garvey (Ireland) Chorus Master**

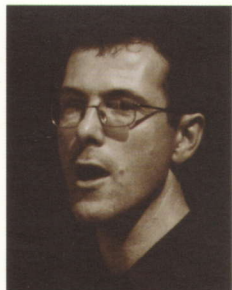
Cathal Garvey made his Opera Ireland debut with *Boris Godunov* in 1999 and has since worked on over thirty operas including, *Aida*, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *Flying Dutchman*, *Silver Tassie*, *Don Carlo*, *Carmen*, *Queen of Spades*, *Andrea Chenier*, *Jenufa*, *Rigoletto* and *Orfeo ed Euridice*. Born in Cork, he studied violin and piano at the Cork School of Music, completed a Masters Degree in Conducting at UCC and did two years of further study at Moscow Conservatory. He is Principal Conductor of the Dublin Orchestral Players and Musical Director of Dun Laoghaire Choral Society. He has also conducted the NSO, the Ulysses Orchestra, the Irish Sinfonia, the Dublin Baroque Players and the RIAM Wind Ensemble. He conducted IORC's *Me and My Girl* in Cork and Dublin, and *Broadway Classics* in the NCH. He has also acted as Chorus Master and Assistant Conductor for Opera South, Lyric Opera, and Anna Livia Opera.





### **Muirne Bloomer (Ireland) Assistant Director**

Dublin-born Muirne Bloomer started dancing with Jill Wigham and later trained at the Irish National College of Dance. She has performed with Dublin City Ballet, Vienna Ballet Theatre, Rubato Ballet, Irish Modern Dance Theatre, Dance Theatre of Ireland and CoisCéim Dance Theatre. Her most recent appearance was in *Knots* at the Samuel Beckett Theatre as part of the Dublin Fringe Festival. Muirne has assisted Artistic Director David Bolger on many shows including *Mermaids* and *Nutcracker* and on Opera Ireland's production of *Orfeo ed Euridice* at the Gaiety Theatre. Other choreographic work includes *Winter* (CoisCéim Season's project 1998), *Dandy Dolls* (Peacock Theatre, 2004), *Dancing at Lughnasa* (An Grianán, 2002 and Gate Theatre, 2004), and *Mixing It on the Mountain* (Calypso Productions 2003). She has also directed the *Brighter Futures* project and *The Nutterfly Effect*, which won Best Pageant at the St Patrick's Day Parade in Dublin. She has just finished working on *Drama at Inish* for the Abbey Theatre.



### **David Adams (Ireland) Répétiteur**

A former organ scholar of St Patrick's Cathedral and TCD, David Adams studied in Freiburg and Amsterdam, winning many international prizes. He appears in recitals and festivals throughout Ireland, the UK and mainland Europe, and is a regular guest with the major Irish orchestras. He works with leading ensembles and soloists in the fields of early and contemporary music, premiering many new works internationally, and has conducted for English Touring Opera, OTC, Ulster Orchestra, Orchestra of St Cecilia and Irish Baroque Orchestra. He has recorded extensively, and recently completed a CD of works by contemporary Irish composers on the organ of the NCH. David has taught at Freiburg Hochschule, Berlin Hochschule, The Hague Conservatory, TCD and the DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama, and currently teaches organ and harpsichord at the RIAM. He gives masterclasses and lectures at home and abroad, and adjudicates national and international competitions. He is organist of Christ Church Taney and St Nahi's in Dublin.



### **Dearbhla Collins (Ireland) Répétiteur**

Dearbhla Collins, is a highly regarded solo pianist, chamber musician and vocal coach who has performed throughout Europe and in Japan and the USA. She was RTÉ Musician of the Future in 1987 and has won awards at the Palm Beach Invitational Competition (1993) and the AXA Dublin International Piano Competition (1991 and 1994). In recent years she has specialised in the song repertoire, partnering singers like Bernadette Greevy, Regina Nathan, Franzita Whelan, Detlef Roth, Lynda Lee and Sam McElroy. She is the vocal coach and a piano teacher at the RIAM and has also worked with Opera Theatre Company and Welsh National Opera. In 1998 she recorded a CD, *Romancing Rebellion* with Kathleen Tynan, and in 2003 directed the Dublin Hugo Wolf Festival. Since January 2005 she is the administrator for the Veronica Dunne International Singing Competition and a member of the board of Culture Ireland. In 2006 she will again collaborate with the Austrian Embassy on the Mozart Festival in Ireland to celebrate the 250th anniversary of Mozart's birth.



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Eye die die dee-dee-dum  
Doo Doo Doo Dooby Do  
Da da da dum da dum

Dee dee dee deedle-doo  
Eye tie di doodle dum  
La la la ha-ha-ha  
La la ti pom pom pom

La eye ti mo-beel  
La hee ta hoo hah  
Oo-bey doo-bey teee  
Dydle dee dum dum

Oh yeah! yeah yeah!  
Dydle-dee dum dum

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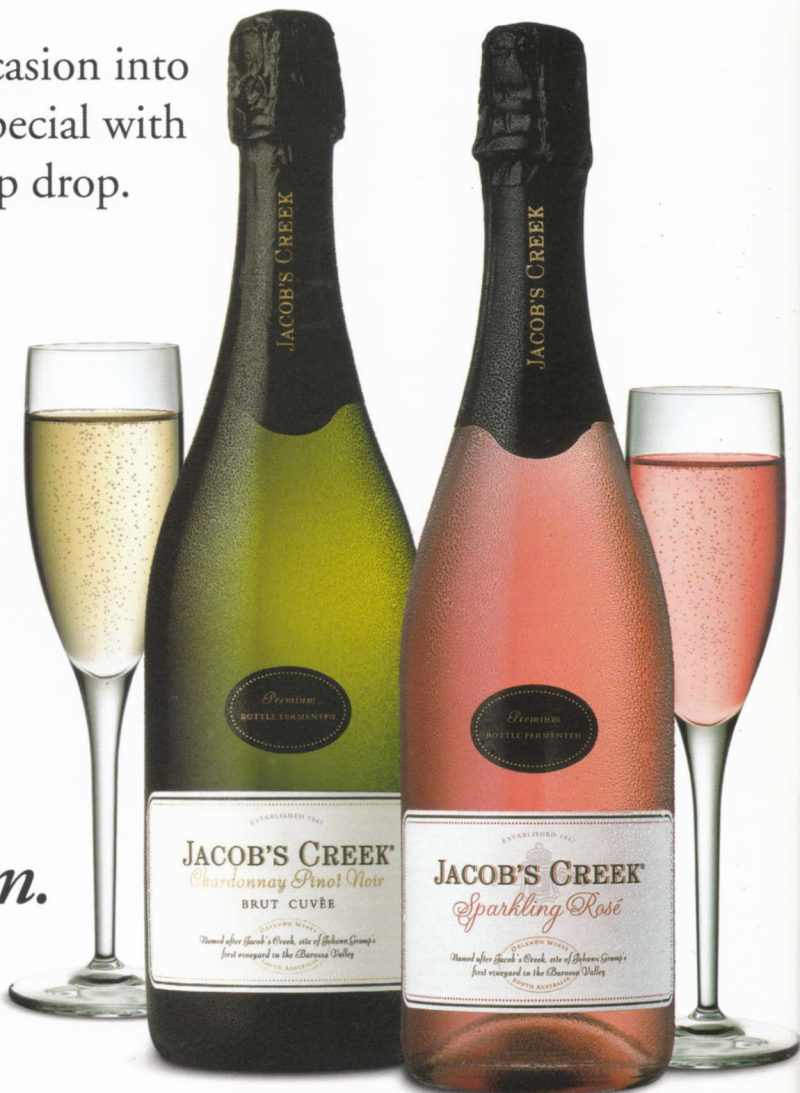
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Maureen Black  
John Blake  
Julia Bobbett  
E J Bourke  
Robin Boyd  
Owen Brady  
George Branagan  
Tony Brown  
David Browne  
Fidelma Browne  
Des Bruton  
Cathrine Burke  
Raymond Burke  
Jacqueline Byrne  
John Byrne  
Valerie Byrne  
William P Byrne  
Patrick Cagney  
Mairead Cahill  
Susan Cahill  
Fionnbar Callanan  
John Carney  
Tom Carney  
Deirdre Carroll  
Mella Carroll  
Alan Carthy  
Clare Carty

Francis A Casey  
Hilda Cassidy  
Dan Cavanagh  
Elizabeth Clancy  
Jo & Andrew Clarke  
Inge Clissman  
T M & Mary Coghlan  
David & Eileen Collopy  
Leonard Condren  
Teresa Connaughton  
Patrick Connolly S.C.  
Margaret Conroy  
Bernadette Corboy  
Niall Corr  
Joan I Costello  
Martin Costello  
John Cowan  
Kevin & Suzanne Cronin  
Maire Cronin  
Marian Cullen  
Lavinia Curtin  
Neil Dalrymple  
Derry & Angela Daly  
Lynn Daly  
Brian Deering  
Ned Dempsey  
Ronan Dennedy  
Zureena Desai  
Patrick Devine  
Aidan Dillon  
Elizabeth Doherty  
Gillian Donnellan  
Owen Donohoe  
Anne & Bernard Dowd  
Carol Dowling  
David Downes  
Joseph H Downes  
Andrea Doyle  
Terence & Danielle Durney  
Ineke Durville

Paul Dwan  
Barbara Eagar  
George E Egar  
Krisztina Eustace-Werkner  
Tim Evans  
Brian Farley  
James Fennelly  
Maedbaine Fennelly  
Barry Fenton  
Mary Finlay Geoghegan  
Aline Finnegan  
Francis Fitzgibbon  
Ann Fitzsimons  
Jennifer Flegg  
Ann Flynn  
Michael Foley  
Gwendolen Foster  
Lesley Fox  
Charlotte A. Frorath  
R.G.C. Fuller  
Aidan Gallagher  
Joseph Gallagher  
Mary Galvin  
Nuala Garrett  
Anne Clare Garvey  
May Giblin  
Gerard Gillen  
Ann Gilmore  
Grania Gilroy  
Michael Glackin  
Joe Gogan  
Stephen Gordon  
Cecily Grant  
Patrick Groarke  
Peter & Moira Haden  
Noreen Hamilton  
Dick Hanrahan  
Philomena Hanratty  
Anthony & Clair Harpur  
Liam & Eithne Healy

# Don't just sit there. Celebrate something.

Turn any occasion into  
something special with  
Australia's top drop.



*Say when.*

## Friends

Maura Hegarty  
Michael Hensey  
Denis Hickey  
Pamela Jean Hickey  
Aideen Higgins  
Niall P. Higgins  
Joseph C. Hogan  
Sean Hogan  
Noel Horgan  
M.P. Hughes  
David Humphries  
Celia Jackson  
Anne Marie James  
Michael Jordan  
K.W.S. Kane  
Regina Kealy  
Mary Keane  
Max Keane  
Rachel M Keane  
Brian Kearney  
Miriam Kearney  
Marguerite Keenan  
Patricia Kelleher  
Elaine Kelly  
Fidelma Kelly  
Patricia B. Kelly  
Patricia Kelly  
P. Kelly  
Paul Kennan  
June Kennedy  
Joan M. Kenny  
Noel Kenny  
John Keogan  
Rhona Keogh  
Liam King  
Dermot Kinlen  
James & Ita Kirwan  
Rita Kirwan  
Aisling De Lacy  
Pat Laffan

Barbara I. Law  
Conor Lawson  
Maureen Lemass  
Donal & Helen Linehan  
Michael Lloyd  
Breda Logan  
Kenneth Lucas  
Karsten Lux  
Martin Lyes  
Catherine Lynch  
Maria Lynch  
Deirdre Lyons  
Gerald Lyons  
Joan MacCarthy  
W.A.L. & J. MacGowan  
Carmel MacHale  
Tony Macken  
Eithne MacManus  
Anne Madsen  
Paul Magnier  
Martin Maguire  
Bryan Maher  
Michelle Malone  
Yvonne Malone  
Anthony & Joan Manning  
Annette McAleer  
Mary McAnaney  
Catherine McBrinn  
Mary McCarthy  
George McCaw  
Michael McClintock  
James J. McCormack  
Angela McCrone  
Brendan McEaney  
Aidan McGowan  
Patrick McGowan  
Felim McLaughlin & Sonya McGuinness  
Frank McGuinness  
Kevin McGuinness

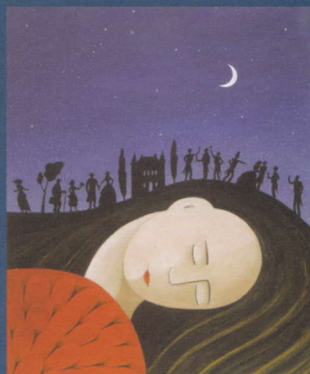
Monica McHenry  
Barbara McKenna  
Justin McKenna  
John & Liz McManus  
T.B.H. McMurry  
Terry Meagher  
C H B Mee  
Stephen & Barbara Mennell  
Michael Moloney  
Luke Mooney  
John Moore  
Sara Moorhead  
Pat Morgan  
Michael Moroney  
Nicola & Robert Mountford  
B.A. Moylan  
Kitty Mulligan  
Mary New Mulvany  
Daniel Murphy  
Kay Murphy  
Ray Murphy  
Ronan Murphy  
Freida Murray  
William Neenan  
David Neligan  
Aine Ni Riain  
Doreen Nolan  
James O Beirne  
Herman O'Brien  
J. Kenneth O'Brien  
Rita O'Brien  
Gerard O'Carroll  
Eleanor O'Connor  
James & Sylvia O'Connor  
Jean O'Connor  
John & Viola O'Connor  
Liam O'Daly  
Dorothy Odium  
Mary O'Donnell  
Donal O'Donovan





## Op-air Opera in the Square

Opera returns to the big screen this November with **La Traviata** showing in Meeting House Square, Temple Bar on Friday, 25th November. Following the roaring success of a similar showing of *Rigoletto* last year, Opera Ireland is giving the public another of its world-class operas, free of charge and larger than life. The opera will commence at 7.30 – as it does on-stage in the Gaiety. The event is unticketed and audiences are free to stay for as much or as little of the opera as they please. Do wrap up well as it is bound to be chilly and bring your cushions if you think you will need to sit down! A big thanks to Dublin City Council for sponsoring the event, The Irish Times for publicising it, and to Temple Bar Properties for hosting. Looking forward to seeing you all there!



## Friends

Colette O'Flaherty  
Rosalind O'Hara  
David O'Higgins  
Maire O'Kelly  
Sean O'Kelly  
Denis O'Leary  
Katherine O'Loughlin  
Kennedy  
Margaret O'Mahony  
Michael A. O'Mahony  
Anne O'Meara  
Joan O'Meara  
Ann O'Neill  
Desmond O'Neill  
Maire O'Reilly  
Rosemary O'Reilly  
Joseph O'Riordan  
Mary Rose O'Shea  
Caitriona O'Sullivan  
Tom Owens  
Patricia Pasley  
Maurizio Passi  
Dorothy Percival  
Caroline Phelan  
Donnie Potter  
Laurence Power  
Hilary & Donald Pratt  
Mary Prendergast  
Seamus Puirseil  
Maura Puite  
Margaret Quigley  
Michael Relihan  
H.H Rennison  
Michael Reynolds  
Patrick Rigney  
Joy Riordan  
Derek Robinson  
Sarah Rogers  
John Rountree  
Patrick D Rowan

Jim Ruane  
Philip Ryan  
Richie & Mairead Ryan  
Barbara Schmidt  
Angela Scully  
Mary J. Sheill  
Mark Sherry  
O D G Skelly  
J W Smyth  
Diana Soese  
Paddy Spain  
Mary Spollen  
Jim Stephen  
Natasha Souter Johnson  
Ursula Sweeney  
Aidan Synnott  
Julie Talbot Brady  
Myles Thorn  
John Tierney  
Mary Tierney  
Mary Toner  
Mary Troy  
John D. Turley  
Brendan & Valerie Twomey  
Sheila Tyrell  
Anne Valentine  
Ada Wall  
Brian & Nolie Walsh  
Kevin Walsh  
Rosemary Walsh  
Thomas Walsh  
Elizabeth Walshe  
Brendan Ward  
Dermot & Maeve Ward  
Mary Warren-Darley  
Niall Watson  
Valerie Webb  
Barbara Whelan  
Linda Williams  
Denis Wood

Laurence Wyer  
Seamus Wynne  
William Young  
Anonymous



# DGOS/OPERA IRELAND PRODUCTIONS 1941 - 2005

## A

**Allegra, Salvatore**

Ave Maria 1959

Il medico suo malgrado 1962

## B

**Balfe, Michael W**

The Bohemian Girl 1943

**Beethoven, Ludwig van**

Fidelio 1954 1994

**Bellini Vincenzo**

La sonnambula 1960 1963

Norma 1955 2003

I puritani 1975

**Britten, Benjamin**

Peter Grimes 1990

**Bizet, Georges**

Carmen 1941 2002

Les pêcheurs de perles 1964 1987

## C

**Charpentier, Gustave**

Louise 1979

**Cilea, Francesco**

Adriana Lecouvreur 1967 1980

**Cimarosa, Domenico**

Il matrimonio segreto 1961

## D

**Debussy, Claude**

Pelléas et Mélisande 1948

**Delibes, Léo**

Lakmé 1993

**Donizetti, Gaetano**

Don Pasquale 1952 1987

L'elisir d'amore 1958 1996

La favorita 1942 1982

La figlia del reggimento 1978

Lucia di Lammermoor 1955 1991

## F

**Flotow, Friedrich von**

Martha 1982 1992

## G

**Giordano, Umberto**

Andrea Chénier 1957 2002

Fedora 1959

**Gluck, Christoph W**

Orfeo ed Euridice 1960 2004

**Gounod, Charles**

Faust 1941 1995

Roméo et Juliette 1945

## H

**Handel, George F**

Giulio Cesare 2001

Messiah 1942

Imeneo 2005

**Humperdinck, Engelbert**

Hänsel und Gretel 1943 1994

## J

**Janáček, Leoš**

Jenůfa 1973 2004

Katya Kabanova 2000

## L

**Lehár, Franz**

The Merry Widow 1997

**Leoncavallo, Ruggiero**

Pagliacci 1941 1998

## M

**Mascagni, Pietro**

L'amico Fritz 1952

Cavalleria rusticana 1941 1998

**Massenet, Jules**

Manon 1952 1980

Werther 1967 1977

**Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus**

Così fan tutte 1950 1993

Don Giovanni 1943 2003

Idomeneo 1956

Top: *Tosca*, 2004

Below: *Gianni Schicchi*, 2005



Die Entführung aus dem Serail  
Le Nozze di Figaro  
Die Zauberflöte

1949 1964  
1942 1997  
1990 2005

**Musorgsky, Modest**  
Boris Godunov

1999

**Offenbach, Jacques**  
Les contes d'Hoffmann

1945 1998

**Ponchielli, Amilcare**  
La Gioconda

1944 1984

**Puccini, Giacomo**  
La Bohème  
Gianni Schicchi  
Madama Butterfly  
Manon Lescaut  
Suor Angelica  
Tosca  
Turandot

1941 1996  
1962 2005  
1942 2000  
1958 1991  
1962  
1941 2004  
1957 1986

**Raffa, Lufino**  
Cecilia

1954

**Rossini, Gioachino**  
Il barbiere di Siviglia  
La Cenerentola  
Italiana in Algeri

1942 1999  
1972 1995  
1978 1992

**Saint-Saëns, Camille**  
Samson et Dalila

1942 1979

**Shostakovich, Dmitri**  
Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk

2000

**Smetana, Bedrich**  
The Bartered Bride

1953 1976

**Strauss, Johann**  
Die Fledermaus  
Der Zigeunerbaron

1962 1998  
1964 1997

**Strauss, Richard**  
Der Rosenkavalier  
Salome

1964 1984  
1999

**T**  
**Thomas, Ambroise**  
Mignon

1966 1973

**Tchaikovsky, Peter Ilich**  
Eugene Onegin  
The Queen of Spades

1969 1997  
1972 2002

**Turnage, Mark-Anthony**  
The Silver Tassie

2001

**V**  
**Verdi, Giuseppe**  
Aida  
Un ballo in maschera  
Don Carlo  
Ernani  
Falstaff  
La forza del destino  
Macbeth  
Nabucco  
Otello  
Rigoletto  
Simon Boccanegra  
La traviata  
Il trovatore

1942 2000  
1949 1992  
1950 2001  
1965 1978  
1960 1998  
1951 1973  
1963 1997  
1962 1986  
1946 1981  
1941 2004  
1956 1974  
1999 2005  
1941 1995

**Victory, Gerard**  
Music Hath Mischief

1968

**W**  
**Wagner, Richard**  
Der fliegende Holländer  
Lohengrin  
Tannhäuser  
Tristan und Isolde  
Die Walküre

1946 2001  
1971 1983  
1943 1977  
1953 1963  
1956

**Wolf-Ferrari, Ermanno**  
Il segreto di Susanna

1956

**Z**  
**Zemlinsky, Alexander von**  
Eine florentinische Tragödie

2005



Top: Rigoletto, 2004

Below: The Magic Flute, 2005

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